

II. The Wild and Scenic Rivers Inventory, Evaluation and Eligibility Determination Process

A. Definitions and Guidelines Used by the Manti-La Sal National Forest In the Eligibility Determination Process

1. Definitions

a. Watercourse Segment –

Reaches or lengths of rivers and streams that have the same or similar character, values, and features.

b. Regions of Comparison –

Geographical areas or regions that are located beyond the boundary of any particular region, and used to compare values between regions. (Ecological Sections were used as Regions of Comparison.)

Maps of the regions of comparison for all values except the Historic Value are included in Section V, Appendix C. (The Regions of Comparison for the Historic Value are based on State boundaries, political divisions and subdivisions and are listed in Section V, Appendix D.)

c. Ecological Sections –

Broad areas of similar regional climate, geomorphic process, stratigraphy, geologic origin, and drainage networks.

d. Scales of Importance –

The level assigned to any one particular outstandingly remarkable value, based on the significance of that value within and between Regions of Comparison. These scales or levels are named: “National”, “Regional”, and “Less than Regional”.

2. General Guidelines

a. Watercourse (River & Stream) Segments

- Watercourses were divided into reaches or segments of essentially similar character.

- Each watercourse was inventoried and evaluated as a whole; and was only divided into segments when there was a significant change in the character of the watercourse or watercourse corridor.

Examples:

- existence of dams and reservoirs and/or
 - significant changes in types or amount of development, physiographic character, tributaries, features, land status, etc.
- Impoundments and dams, which generally impounded a large portion of the annual stream flow were simply eliminated from the segment, i.e., they became segmentation points.
 - Watercourses were not necessarily broken into segments, simply because there are several small private sections interspersed along the watercourse.

b. Tributaries to watercourses

- Tributaries of main watercourse were included as part of the main watercourse if the following applied:
 - 1) The tributaries were integral to the values of the main watercourse and had the same or very near the same natural resource values, including potential outstandingly remarkable values; and
 - 2) Separating the tributary from the main watercourse diminished the values of the tributary and the main watercourse.
- Tributaries that were not integral to the principal watercourse and did not have the same or very near the same natural resource values were considered separately.

B. Inventory and Evaluation Steps

Forest staff and specialists initiated and completed the following steps as part of the eligibility determination process:

1. Watersheds and associated watercourses were mapped at the “5th Level Hydrologic Unit Code” with a scale of 1:100,000.

2. Each watercourse was evaluated for the following outstandingly remarkable values:

Scenic General Recreation White-water Recreation Geologic/Hydrologic Fisheries Wildlife	Cultural Historic Other Similar Values, i.e., <i>(Ecological/Biological Diversity</i> <i>Paleontologic and Botanical)</i>
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3. The outstandingly remarkable values were rated “High”, “Medium” or “Low” according to the significance of the resource values and attributes. The following is a sample of watercourse attributes used as part of the evaluation process: quality of resources, diversity, values of species, feature abundance, character, experience and habitat quality, level of use, attraction, opportunities, access, site integrity, rarity, educational/scientific, etc.
4. Watercourses with no outstandingly remarkable values were dismissed from further evaluation.
5. Watercourses with all the outstanding remarkable values rated “Low” or “Moderate” were considered ineligible.
6. Outstandingly remarkable values were also rated “National”, “Regional”, or “Less than Regional” in importance, based on Regions of Comparison.
7. Watercourses that had at least one outstandingly remarkable value rated “High”, with a “National” or “Regional” Scale of Importance, and considered “free-flowing” were considered eligible for a tentative classification as defined by the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, i.e., “Recreational”, “Scenic”, or “Wild”.
8. Watercourses that had at least one potential outstandingly remarkable value rated “High”, with a “Less than Regional” Scale of Importance, and considered “free-flowing” were considered ineligible for a tentative classification as defined by the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act

C. Guidelines for Determining Rating and Scale of Importance for Outstandingly Remarkable Values:

1. **Ratings** – The rating for each Outstandingly Remarkable Value was determined to be High, Moderate, or Low based on the following:

High (H) when a majority or all of the attributes for the Value existed, as included in the definition of the Value. *

Moderate (M) when half of the attributes for the Value existed, as included in the definition of the Value. *

Low (L) when less than half of the attributes for the Value existed, as included in the definition of the Value. *

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The definitions and attributes of the Outstandingly Remarkable Values are included in Section V, Appendix D.

2. **Scales of Importance** – The Scale of Importance for each Outstandingly Remarkable Value was established as follows:

National Importance (N) if the attributes for the corresponding criteria and Value for a particular watercourse would be considered significant in the majority of the Regions of Comparison;

Regional Importance (R) if the attributes for the corresponding criteria and Value for a particular watercourse would be considered significant in half of the Regions of Comparison; and

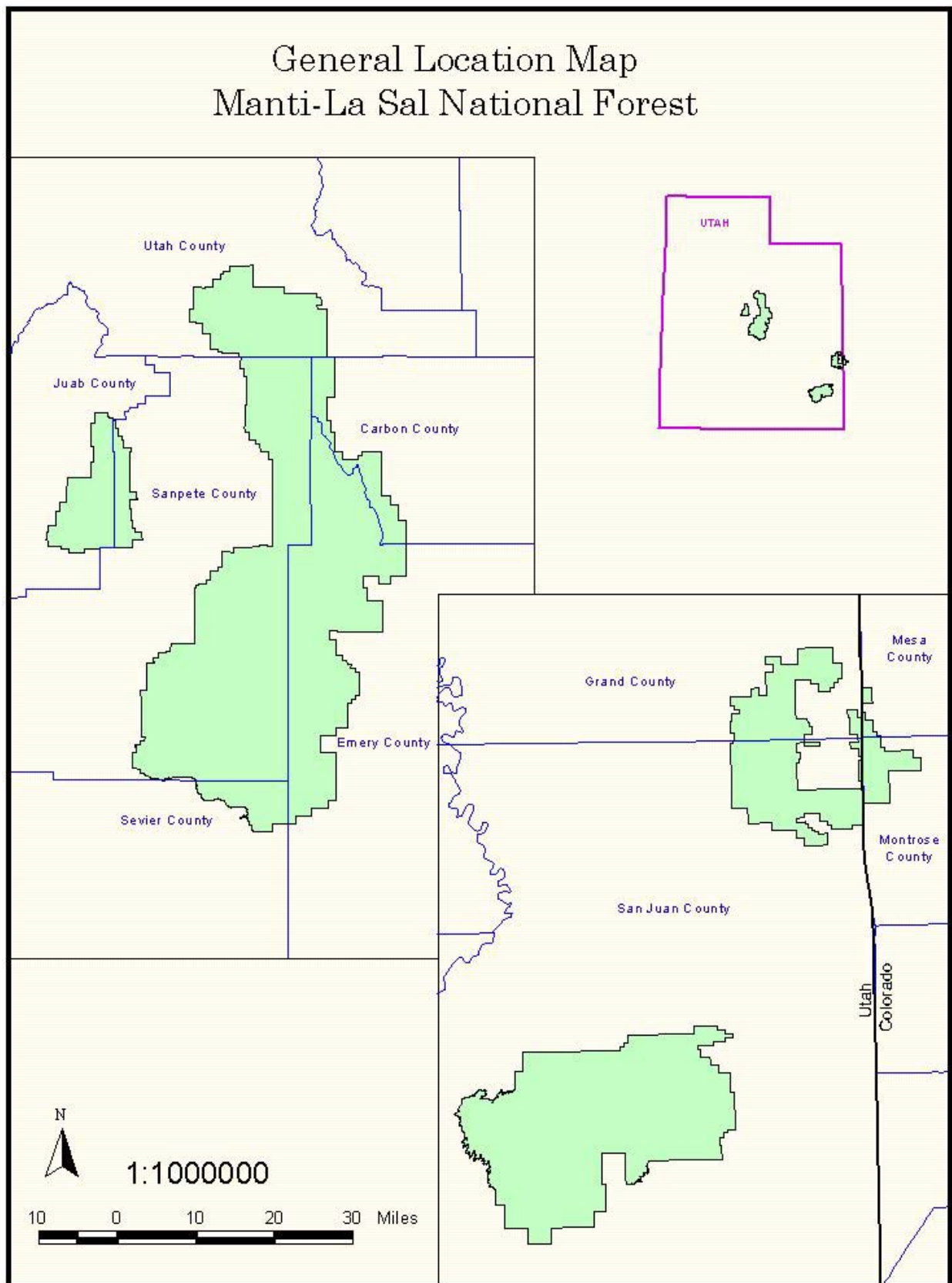
Less the Regional Importance (L) if the attributes for the corresponding criteria and Value would be considered significant in less than half for the Regions of Comparison.

D. Interagency and Local Government Coordination and Other Public Involvement

Although the inventory and evaluation process for the Eligible phase was not a National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process, the Manti-La Sal National Forest solicited participation by federal and state agencies, local government groups, Native American tribes and interested publics. The objective of this solicitation was to determine if the data collected for watercourses with potential outstandingly remarkable values was accurate and complete (data on potential outstandingly remarkable values, watercourse segments, free-flowing characteristics, and other related natural, physical and socioeconomic values). Regulations, policy, procedures and agreements associated with the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act of 1968 prohibited changes or modifications to definitions, terms, and guidelines and procedures for determining eligibility. Comments on these items were accepted and noted, but did not affect changes.

A map of the general location of the Manti-La Sal National Forest and concerned counties in Utah and Colorado is included on the following page. The map is followed by a description of the coordination process between federal land management agencies, local government and other interested publics.

Section V, Appendix E includes a list of federal and state agencies, local government groups, Native American tribes and publics that participated or were otherwise involved in the process. Appendix F includes documentation of changes to the data, based on the coordination process and comments received.



The following coordination occurred during the Eligibility Determination process:

1. Mailings, Meetings and Documentation

The Manti-La Sal National Forest provided meeting notification letters and information packets, and/or scheduled and convened coordination meetings with the following offices and entities:

(Each of the following offices and entities were mailed introductory cover letters, an overview of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Process, and an “Information Packet for the Draft Wild and Scenic Rivers Eligibility Determination Process”. The information packet contained a listing of all inventoried rivers, potential outstandingly remarkable values, free-flowing characteristics, potential eligibility ratings and tentative Wild and Scenic Rivers classifications.)

- a. Utah Bureau of Land Management (Utah BLM) – Price River Field Office, Richfield Field Office, Moab Field Office and Monticello Field Office; and the National Park Service (NPS) – Canyonlands National Park, Arches National Park and Natural Bridges National Monument

Representatives from the Manti-La Sal National Forest and the above BLM and NPS offices coordinated, compared and agreed upon watershed boundaries, watercourses, potential outstandingly remarkable values, ratings, scales of importance and tentative classifications. When and where needed, changes were made the eligibility determination factors.

- b. Colorado Bureau of Land Management (Colorado BLM) – Field offices in Mesa and Montrose Counties; and Colorado - Mesa and Montrose County Offices

Although meetings were not held with these offices, the cover letter and information packet included a request for reviews and comments on the watercourses of joint concern along the Utah/Colorado border.

- c. Utah Counties of Sanpete, Emery, and Carbon (Manti Division; and San Juan and Grand (La Sal Division)

Meetings were held with each office after they had reviewed the information packets mentioned above. A representative of the State of Utah Governor’s Office of Planning and Budget conducted the initial meetings with the counties. Representatives from the State and Manti-La Sal National Forest discussed and illustrated the inventory and evaluation process, and potentially eligible watercourses, after which they addressed comments and questions from participants. State of Utah and Forest representatives asked county officials to provide

“subject matter experts” to review and/or assist the Forest in checking the accuracy of the data gathered during the eligibility phase. Each meeting was followed with a letter and visits to county offices, with the objective of continuing the dialog on details of the eligibility phase, and validating the accuracy of inventory and evaluation data.

d. Native American Tribes

The above-mentioned mailing was sent to the following Native American tribal headquarters, with a request for review and comment:

Piute
Navajo
Ute Mountain-Utah
White Mesa
Hopi

e. Other interested publics and groups

The above-mentioned mailing was sent to publics and groups who had indicated an interest in the Wild and Scenic Rivers Process, with a request for review and comment: *A list of these publics and groups is included in Section V, Appendix E.*

2. Follow up Responses and Changes by Manti-La Sal National Forest Staff and Specialists

Forest staff and specialists reviewed all comments that were received on the accuracy of the inventory and analysis data. As appropriate, changes were made to ratings of outstandingly remarkable values, free-flowing characteristics, scales of importance and tentative Wild and Scenic River classifications. *These changes are documented Section V, Appendix F.*

As mentioned previously, comments on definitions, terms, guidelines and procedures for determining eligibility (as included in the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act and associated Agreements) were accepted and documented, but regulations and established policy, procedures and agreements prohibited changes or modifications.